

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 014100  
ORIGIN PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NSCE-00 ACDA-12 SS-15 SP-02  
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EUR/NE:MR. WORRELL  
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NSC:MR. THOMPSON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
INFO USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY  
SECDEF PRIORITY  
USCINCEUR PRIORITY  
CINCUSAFE PRIORITY  
USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY  
HQ 3 AF RAF MILDENHALL

S E C R E T STATE 014100

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: NATO, MPOL, MILI, UK

SUBJECT: RAF GREENHAM COMMON

REFS: (A) LONDON 10516; (B) STATE 154320

EMBASSY SHOULD APPROACH FCO AND MOD TO EXPLORE  
POSSIBILITY OF EXPANDING USE OF PRESENT USAF STANDBY  
FACILITY AT GREENHAM COMMON IN ORDER TO LOCATE 15 KC-135  
AIRCRAFT AT THAT BASE. EMBASSY SHOULD DRAW ON THE  
FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS:

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1. TO IMPROVE AIR REFUELING SUPPORT FOR OUR EUROPEAN  
BASED TACTICAL FORCE, USG IS CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY  
OF EXPANDING USE OF PRESENT USAF STANDBY FACILITY AT  
GREENHAM COMMON IN ORDER TO RELOCATE 15 KC-135 AIRCRAFT  
FROM THE US TO THAT BASE.

(AS REGARDS MULLEY'S QUESTION ON POSSIBLE B-52 USE OF

GREENHAM COMMON (PARA 5, REF A), YOU SHOULD ASSURE MULLEY THAT USAF PRESENTLY HAS NO PLANS TO USE GREENHAM COMMON FOR B-52'S.)

2. USAF PLANNING FOR AIR DEFENSE AND OFFENSIVE AIR OPERATIONS IN EUROPE IS DEPENDENT ON TIMELY RECEIPT OF

AIR REFUELING SUPPORT. LARGE SCALE AIR REFUELING OPERATIONS WILL BE REQUIRED TO GAIN MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS OUT OF EVERY COMBAT SORTIE FLOWN BY TACTICAL AIRCRAFT. EFFECTIVE WARTIME EMPLOYMENT OF TANKER AIRCRAFT IS DEPENDENT, IN PART, ON HAVING THE NECESSARY FACILITIES ALREADY IN THEATER TO INITIATE SUSTAINED COMBAT SUPPORT OPERATIONS ON SHORT NOTICE.

3. THE LIMITED KC-135 FORCE CURRENTLY TDY IN EUROPE WAS DESIGNED TO MEET THE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS OF OUR IN-PLACE TACTICAL FORCES IN THE EARLY TO MID 1970S. SINCE THAT TIME THE SIZE OF OUR IN-PLACE FIGHTER FORCE HAS EXPANDED BY 78 AIR REFUELABLE AIRCRAFT. EFFORTS TO PROVIDE MORE REALISTIC TRAINING TO OUR AIRCREWS HAVE FURTHER EXPANDED THE NEED FOR AIR REFUELING SUPPORT TO CONDUCT ACTIVITIES SUCH AS F-15 TRAINING OVER THE NORTH SEA, AN AGGRESSOR(F-5) DISSIMILAR AIR COMBAT TACTICS (DACT) PROGRAM, AND ELECTRONIC WARFARE TRAINING IN THE NORTHERN UNITED KINGDOM. IN ADDITION TO NORMAL TRAINING OF IN-PLACE FORCES, TANKERS  
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ALSO SUPPORT PEACETIME EXERCISES AND TACTICAL ROTATIONAL UNITS ON SHORT-TERM DEPLOYMENTS TO EUROPE. IN SUM, THE EXISTING TANKER FORCE WAS NOT DESIGNED TO COPE WITH THE EXPANDING PEACETIME REQUIREMENTS FOR AIR REFUELING SUPPORT.

4. UNDER THIS PROPOSAL AN AUSTERE INTERIM TURNAROUND CAPABILITY FOR KC-135 AIRCRAFT WOULD BE ESTABLISHED AT GREENHAM COMMON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER HMG APPROVAL OF THE OVERALL DEPLOYMENT IS RECEIVED. THIS WOULD INVOLVE RECEIVING, REFUELING, AND RELAUNCHING ONE AIRCRAFT A DAY USING A LIMITED NUMBER OF PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES AND WOULD PROVIDE AN EXPERIENCE FACTOR FOR DETERMINING RESOURCE NEEDS FOR SUBSEQUENT OPERATIONS. SIX TO NINE MONTHS LATER CONVERSION TO FULL TIME OPERATIONS WOULD BEGIN WITH AN INCREMENT OF FIVE KC-135 AIRCRAFT ON A TDY BASIS. FROM THE TIME THE FIRST FIVE AIRCRAFT ARRIVE, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT WOULD INCREASE INCREMENTALLY TO FIFTEEN AND THE TDY STATUS OF SUPPORT PERSONNEL WOULD SLOWLY CHANGE TO PERMANENT STATUS AS FACILITIES BECOME AVAILABLE. AIRCRAFT AND AIRCREWS WOULD REMAIN TDY THROUGHOUT. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE TOTAL COMPLEMENT OF

PCS US MILITARY PERSONNEL ASSOCIATED WITH THE EXPANSION  
OF THE RAF GREENHAM COMMON MISSION WILL BE LESS THAN  
1500 (PLUS APPROXIMATELY 2000 DEPENDENTS).

5. REQUEST YOU ADVISE WHEN INITIAL CONTACT WITH HMG HAS  
BEEN MADE ON THIS MATTER.  
CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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